(b) if so, what are the reasons for providing these concessions to COREX technology only and not to other steel plants; and

(c) whether Government would consider providing these concessions to other conventional steel plants also and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the Budget 2002-03 the customs duty on metallurgical coke has been reduced from 15% to 5% for steel units using COREX technology. This is in line with the similar concession available to other conventional steel plants using the blast furnace route.

(c) The question does not arise as the concession is already available to other conventional steel plants.

SAIL's Losses

3478. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Steel Authority of India Limited has plunged into loss of Rs. 585.3 crores; and

(b) if so, what is the impact of the financial package given to SAIL by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) incurred a loss of Rs. 585 crores during the third quarter of 2001-02.

(b) The financial package approved by the Government in February, 2000 included waiver of Steel Development Fund (SDF) loan of Rs. 5073 crores and loan of Rs. 381 crores from the Government of India. SAIL was able to reduce its losses by Rs. 756.80 crores in 1999-2000 consequent to the adjustment made on account of financial restructuring.

Import of ship-breaking scrap

3479. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing import of ship-breaking scrap into the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the flow of the ship-breaking scrap has an adverse impact on the steel industries; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?